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ABSTRACT

The National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education (NCPSE) is a federally funded project that collects and disseminates information on the training and available supply of special education professionals. Pertinent information on the supply, demand, and need of special education teachers in rural areas is difficult to find. This difficulty is increased by diverse definitions of "rural" and the problem of pulling data on special education out of data on general education. However, NCPSE has compiled data from the 1993-94 Schools and Staffing Survey that cover rural special educators, the difficulty in filling vacant positions, teacher satisfaction, and teacher certification. The Division of Research to Practice of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs appropriates funds to institutions of higher education and nonprofit agencies to support training of personnel in special education, related services, and early intervention. NCPSE maintains a database of all grants awarded in 1995 and 1996. Other NCPSE databases cover all colleges and universities that have preparation programs for special education and related services; literature on issues affecting training, employment, supply, and demand of special education and related services personnel; and financial aid programs for students pursuing special education careers. Data tables provide details on teacher supply and demand in various fields and types of schools, and on personnel preparation grants by state. (SV)

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NCPSE--WE HAVE THE ANSWERS

The National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education (NCPSE) is a federally funded project operated by The Council for Exceptional Children. The mission of NCPSE is to collect, analyze, and disseminate information that will guide efforts to increase the adequacy of the available supply of qualified, diverse special education and related services professionals. NCPSE has an extensive publications program, a toll-free telephone service, a web site that includes many of its products (http://www.cec.sped.org/ncpse.htm), and a professional staff that collaborates with colleagues across the country in the preparation of publications, products, and presentations.

Shortages of qualified special education and related services professionals to serve children with disabilities in rural areas are well-known and expected to continue in the future. NCPSE has information and resources on issues affecting the supply, demand, need, recruitment, training, and retention of special educators and related services professionals in rural settings. This session provides data on the supply and demand of special education teachers, information on US Department of Education training grants to prepare teachers in rural areas, and information on how personnel at local education agencies, state education agencies, and universities and the public can access and utilize this information.

Supply and Demand Data

It is not easy to find pertinent information on the supply, demand, and need of special education teachers in rural areas. This is made even more difficult by the diverse definitions of "rural" and by the difficulty of pulling data on special education out of the data on general education. However, data from the National Center for Education *Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94* that provide information on rural special educators and the difficulty in filling vacant positions will be shared (See Tables 1 and 2). This will include information on the number of special education teachers in rural areas and their responses to the following questions: (1) likelihood of becoming a teacher again; (2) level of satisfaction with various aspects of their working condition; and (3) type of certification they hold in their main teaching assignment field.

Division of Research to Practice Training Grants

The Division of Research to Practice (formerly called the Division of Personnel Preparation), Office of Special Education Programs, US Department of Education, appropriates funds to institutions of higher education and other appropriate nonprofit agencies to assist them in training personnel for careers in special education, related services, and early intervention services. NCPSE maintains a database of all these grants awarded in 1995 and 1996. (Some of the information on the "total amount awarded" for 1996 is currently incomplete but will be added to the database soon.) A list of all those grants that have "rural" as one of their major components will be provided. A summary of this information can be found in Table 3 (1995) and Table 4

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(1996). In 1995, 124 grants were awarded to 72 grantees. These grants provided training for 2,557 students. $4,845,564 was provided as stipends to students. The total amount awarded was $12,385,000. In 1996, 98 grants were awarded to 62 grantees. Training was provided to 1,727 students and students received $3,892,203 in stipends. Data on the "total amount awarded" is incomplete.

Other NCPSE Databases

1. NCPSE maintains a database of all the colleges and universities that have preparation programs for special education and many of the related services. This information is available through several means. State sheets and lists by many disability categories are available in hard copy and at our web site. Specialized searches of the database are also available by request. It is also possible to create a file of addresses of all or selected programs that can be used to prepare mailing labels for those doing research or sending out other surveys. NCPSE is currently updating this database and is including information on distance education options and/or other nontraditional options of course delivery. A complete update of the database should be completed by Summer 1997.

2. NCPSE maintains a database of literature pertinent to issues that affect the training, employment, supply, demand, retention and attrition of special education and related services personnel. This database includes journal literature, conference proceedings, brochures, reports, and other selected printed documents. NCPSE staff can search the database on such topics as recruitment and retention strategies, alternative certification programs, personnel shortages and any others. Staff are more than happy to make specialized searches.

3. NCPSE maintains a database of financial aid programs, scholarships and grants for students interested in careers in special education or one of the related services. This database serves as a the basis for our preprinted products, all of which can be found at our web site. This database is updated and each item in the list is verified annually.

For further information contact:

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Table 1

Of Schools That Could Have Had Vacancies In Various Teaching Fields, Percentage With Vacancies In Those Fields By Selected School Characteristics: 1993-94

Type of School	General Elementary	Special Education	English	Math	Physical Sciences	Biology or Life Sciences	ESL or Bilingual Education
PUBLIC							
Central City	89.3	59.6	39.3	44.4	35.4	32.4	36.2
Urban fringe/large town	87.0	52.8	44.2	45.8	39.4	31.7	28.2
Rural/small town	82.3	51.9	39.9	40.5	30.1	26.3	21.2
PRIVATE							
Central City	92.1	43.7	50.4	52.0	46.1	45.1	9.8
Urban fringe/large town	87.5	42.6	40.9	42.1	41.4	35.3	7.3
Rural/small town	90.0	34.0	40.2	38.7	37.2	36.5	16.9

Source: Henke, R. R., Choy, S. P., Geis, S., & Brougham, S. P. (1996). *Schools and Staffing in the United States: A Statistical Profile, 1993-94.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Table 2

Percentage Of Schools With Vacancies In Various Teaching Fields That Found It Very Difficult Or Impossible To Fill The Vacancies, By Selected School Characteristics: 1993-94

Type of School	General Elementary	Special Education	English	Math	Physical Sciences	Biology or Life Sciences	ESL or Bilingual Education
PUBLIC							
Central City	3.5	23.9	3.4	23.0	25.6	25.9	33.1
Urban fringe/large town	1.2	18.3	4.0	9.2	16.3	12.5	16.9
Rural/small town	2.0	19.4	3.7	12.7	13.9	11.3	30.0
PRIVATE							
Central City	3.6	24.8	3.6	18.8	21.1	17.5	--
Urban fringe/large town	2.3	13.4	2.5	13.8	16.8	15.3	--
Rural/small town	4.4	10.7	6.5	9.8	27.5	22.8	--

Note: -- Too few cases for a reliable estimate.

Source: Henke, R. R., Choy, S. P., Geis, S., & Brougham, S. P. (1996). *Schools and Staffing in the United States: A Statistical Profile, 1993-94.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Table 3

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
Research to Practice Division (formerly Division of Personnel Preparation) Grants
Projects Related to Rural Areas for Fiscal Year 1995

State	Grants FY95	Grantees FY95	Persons to be Trained FY95	Stipend FY95	Total Awarded FY95
Alaska	2	2	10	$46,861	$230,166
Alabama	5	3	60	$205,615	$472,975
Arkansas	2	2	5	$46,575	$265,929
Arizona	3	2	70	$122,066	$354,671
California	7	3	173	$208,055	$771,011
Colorado	5	2	527	$153,244	$505,166
Connecticut	1	1	11	$0	$105,132
Florida	2	2	43	$125,400	$241,384
Georgia	2	2	30	$77,572	$178,064
Idaho	4	2	52	$222,713	$418,477
Illinois	1	1	12	$14,867	$78,464
Indiana	1	1	5	$82,250	$87,087
Kansas	3	1	48	$77,380	$308,289
Kentucky	6	2	119	$305,282	$304,755
Louisiana	2	2	40	$33,470	$169,948
Maine	2	1	38	$65,280	$195,114
Michigan	1	1	12	$42,586	$99,391
Minnesota	1	1	200	$17,500	$95,908
Missouri	3	2	74	$187,541	$315,697
Montana	3	2	26	$22,100	$291,904
Nebraska	2	2	8	$47,800	$272,251
Nevada	2	1	80	$32,865	$167,287
New Hampshire	1	1	3	$41,000	$69,645
New Mexico	5	2	77	$178,600	$539,678
New York	2	2	15	$125,000	$150,032
North Carolina	5	4	102	$186,095	$425,286
North Dakota	2	2	28	$46,360	$211,098
Ohio	1	1	5	$42,183	$112,709
Oklahoma	1	1	26	$47,499	$125,734
Oregon	5	2	56	$198,732	$531,895
Pennsylvania	6	3	42	$310,442	$624,490
Puerto Rico	1	1	32	$59,551	$87,811
South Carolina	2	1	31	$74,640	$163,086
Tennessee	1	1	15	$24,570	$50,159
Texas	11	6	134	$522,930	$1,176,204
Utah	7	2	77	$217,470	$591,564
Vermont	4	1	119	$158,630	$406,526
Virginia	2	1	20	$182,300	$246,245
West Virginia	6	2	97	$201,750	$455,328
Wisconsin	2	1	35	$90,790	$188,440
TOTALS	**124**	**72**	**2557**	**$4,845,564**	**$12,385,000**

Table 4

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
Research to Practice Division (formerly Division of Personnel Preparation) Grants
Projects Related to Rural Areas for Fiscal Year 1996

State	Grants FY96	Grantees FY96	Persons to be Trained FY96	Stipend FY96	Total Awarded FY96*
Alaska	2	2	10	$46,861	$0
Alabama	1	1	11	$48,160	$0
Arkansas	1	1	0	$0	$0
Arizona	3	2	70	$122,066	$354,671
California	5	3	108	$182,255	$0
Colorado	4	2	35	$106,018	$125,000
Connecticut	0	0	0	$0	$0
Florida	2	2	43	$125,400	$0
Georgia	2	2	30	$52,000	$76,466
Hawaii	1	1	20	$18,000	$80,791
Idaho	3	2	32	$156,763	$0
Illinois	1	1	72	$58,200	$156,024
Kansas	3	2	47	$114,580	$219,204
Kentucky	3	2	60	$146,300	$0
Louisiana	2	2	40	$33,470	$0
Maine	1	1	8	$54,480	$0
Michigan	1	1	12	$42,586	$0
Minnesota	1	1	200	$17,500	$0
Missouri	2	1	39	$123,541	$0
Montana	4	2	41	$40,300	$137,355
Nebraska	2	2	8	$47,800	$0
Nevada	1	1	43	$13,545	$0
New Hampshire	1	1	3	$41,000	$0
New Mexico	3	2	52	$129,229	$323,087
New York	0	0	0	$0	$0
North Carolina	5	4	102	$186,095	$0
North Dakota	2	2	28	$46,360	$0
Ohio	0	0	0	$0	$0
Oklahoma	0	0	0	$0	$0
Oregon	4	2	48	$194,100	$0
Pennsylvania	5	2	34	$230,318	$0
Puerto Rico	1	1	32	$59,551	$0
South Carolina	1	1	15	$58,669	$0
Tennessee	0	0	0	$0	$0
Texas	10	6	117	$477,210	$1,076,510
Utah	6	2	91	$197,070	$99,521
Vermont	5	1	134	$193,561	$91,596
Virginia	2	1	??	$182,300	$0
West Virginia	6	2	107	$256,125	$226,543
Wisconsin	2	1	35	$90,790	$0
TOTALS	**98**	**62**	**1727**	**$3,892,203**	**$2,966,768**

* Not all data has been compiled for FY 1996 Total Award Amounts